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THE BOOK OF THE DEAD AND RAIN CEREMONIALS.

BY ELLEN RUSSELL EMERSON.

I.

Among the Egyptians, as among our red races, supernatural power was sought through talismanic formula ; pictures were imbued with magic influences, while the language of the ritual, written in hieroglyphics, contained a psychic force like that which the Indian priest attributed to his mnemonics, for the figures used, whether pictographic or hieroglyphic, were a living expression, the significance of which was vital to the well-being of man.

This belief culminated, as was natural, into an apotheosis of the divine *litteræ humaniores*, and there is found in the Egyptian pantheon a god of letters—a *Logos*, if it may be so termed—whose power is comparable to Osiris, the Lord of the Dead ; and this god, *Thoth*, is also the God of Truth.

In that famous scene representing the judgment of the soul, in the Book of the Dead, Thoth is represented in the act of writing the sentence that seals the fate of the deceased, in which office he is both a god of letters and the Lord of Truth ; these attributes are indicated by a writing tablet and the feather, that badge of truth ascribed to him as to all gods of light in the Egyptian pantheon.

This association of "truth," letters, and light in the attributes of one personality* provides a suggestion as to what the Egyptian

* See Hymn to Amen-Ra (translation of C. W. Goodwin), in which appear united in one personality the attributes of light and truth ; also the principle of life.

priest meant when ascribing talismanic power to inscriptions. The hieroglyphic writing is truth, and truth is life; but care should be taken not to ascribe a too modern meaning to ancient ideas of "truth," for it is doubtful if the talismanic force in the letters—that is, the "truth" therein set forth—was conceived as purely an intellectual force. On the contrary, physics and psychics were not then divorced. These two contents of the letter were in essence the same; and life was light, as also it was truth. The Egyptian prayed that light should radiate upon his mummy, that he might live. The power of visible things, the force in the letter, were not discriminated from the objects themselves, and therefore the rigorous adherence to the formula, as in more primitive rites:

"Have I told the truth to my son?"

(Nawa^a ni-ma-na ninguis?)

inquires the Ojibwa Midē* in his initiatory chant, a strict adherence to the traditional formula of the ceremonial over which he presides being exercised at all points, for each is weighted with the issues of life. All remedial effect thus depending upon the right methods used—that is, the appropriate mnemonic and special rite at each juncture of the performance—the ceremonial became a vital organism, whose functions were interdependent and in whose least part existed a necessary particle of magical force—the force of life. In the Egyptian judgment of the soul the heart is put in the divine scales and weighed with "truth;" and—

"I am using my heart"

(Na min de he ya-ya-nē)

chants the Midē woman, and the Midē man takes up the same refrain:

"In my heart, in my heart

I have the spirit."

(Nin-dai'-a nin-dai'-a ha!)

(We kima' ha wa-no-kwe!)

The heart was believed to be the seat of life, but also of the moral sense, and, as has been said of the Egyptian, the Indian did not discriminate between the two, the physical functions of

*See the Midēwiwin of the Ojibwas. W. J. Hoffman: Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1885-'6.

life and the "spirit" dwelling therein, psychical and physical phenomena not being concomitant, but fundamentally one, a view of existence which to some ways of thinking degrades the "spirit" and in another aspect sublimates the physical functions of which the "spirit" is essentially part. This psychic force in the heart—that is, according to the Indian, the "life"—was not in its nature different from that permeating the pictograph. It is therefore readily understood how necessary was an exactness to formula, and it is no occasion of wonder that the Egyptian, through his belief in the talismanic power of the hieroglyphic, placed on the same moral basis a good or well ordered life and a rigid adherence to religious rites, the performance of which was as necessary in order to become divinized, an Osiriana, as is right living.

"There is no fault in him ;
No informer rises up against him.
He liveth the truth ;
He doth nourish himself with truth.
The gods are satisfied with all that he hath done.
He hath given food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty,
Clothes to the naked ;
He hath given the sacred food to the gods."*

So chants the Egyptian, declaring the justification of the dead, but all of which does not accomplish beatification, for it is added, "When this book has been made for him, then he breathes with the souls of the gods forever and forever. It is finished ;" and the sacred book, with its talismanic text, is laid upon the dead body in the region of the heart, in which act may again be noted the significance placed upon the heart in Egyptian offices of the dead. It was the heart that was weighed with truth in the judgment scene, and here the "book" is laid upon the region of the heart. The barbaric Indian priest chants, "I am using my heart," signifying that he is acting uprightly, the "spirit" being "in his heart," thus establishing a primitive precedence to the Egyptian idea and illustrating, what is so often met with among primitive peoples, the recognition that if the heart is true the man's life is "justified," to use an Egyptian term, an idea of great ethical interest. This parallel, discover-

* Book of Breaths of Life." See M. J. Horrack's translation ; also De Brugsch, transc. hiero., &c., Berlin Museum.

able in Egyptian ideas and those of the Ojibwa Indian, invites attention to the rites in which these ideas are expressed.

The "Book of the Dead," represented on various monuments and papyri, is a series of representations of what happens to the deceased in his passage in the under world from west to east—that is, from death to immortal birth. The means by which the scenes of this journey are portrayed are not unlike those used in other and more primitive forms of representation, such as, for instance, those seen in Mexican codices, where vignette is intended to explain the hieroglyphic. They are, however, more graphic, and the figures have conventionalized into a shape which lends a harmony to the lines, so becoming much more pleasing to the eye. This pleasing feature, however, does not conceal the fact that there were many objects, animate or inanimate, held sacred which were used in primitive ceremonials. For instance, it is evident that the mask which our Indian used as representative of his deities was in high favor in Egypt, the deities being identified by their masks; nor did the Egyptian use the human mask, but, like more primitive peoples, he represented his gods in the disguise of animals' heads, and as among barbarians he not only represents the head, but the whole figure is portrayed, and birds and beasts have part in the most sacred drama of all Egyptian ceremonials. It is true an anthropomorphic tendency is shown, as the gods are most frequently human-divine, their heads being that of beasts and their bodies of men, and often this sameness of personal or human shape has the effect of a monotheistic foreshadowing which a similarity of badges suggests; but a sameness of badges or the human shape is not a usage forward of the barbaric stage of development. For instance, as regards the badge of the feather, the most important of all insignia in Egyptian rite, since it typifies both light and truth,—this badge is equally used in solemn rites among the Pueblo Indians, while their deities are represented in the human shape, and it must be observed that a sameness of badge and the "human form divine" does not exempt these Indians from the charge of polytheism; nor does the concept of the Indian represented by the feather fall far short of that of the Egyptian, for it is used in rites of worship of the sun; and the name given to the downy breast feather of the eagle, the "breath feather," which is one of the principal emblems of the

Tusayan Indians,* suggests its association with life, since they call the soul the "breath body."

This breath feather is a prayer offering, and when the devotee makes his morning orisons he lays it in the way of the coming light as an appeal for the blessing of the God of Day. It therefore is as clearly associated with light as is the Egyptian plume. In one case the devotee selects the eagle-down feather and in the other the ostrich plume, it is true, but both are emblems of the gods of light.

Both Indian and Egyptian use the same symbolic expression to represent the life-giving forces of light. Seeking the most etherial and delicate object, each resorts to the feather, which vibrates at a touch of the wind or with the lightest breath, so appearing tremulous with life, and as if to confirm the parallel we read in Egyptian text:

"The soul of Ra giveth life to thy soul.

The soul of Shou filleth thy respiratory organs with soft breath."†

In which the God of the Sun and the God of Light, to each of whom the badge of the ostrich plume is given, are both mentioned—the one as giver of life; the other of breath.

II.

Much as has been said of the wonderful mastery of the building art among the Egyptians, as testified by its earliest monuments, there is an initial form which marks an evolution in architecture, for the column of the earlier period was a plain shaft with painted devices decorating its surfaces, and this was afterward superseded by more ornate designs in the polygonal or round, while a generous sculpture took the place of the painted device. This fact, discoverable in building art, is presented in the representations of the Book of the Dead. It has been remarked that the column of the ornate period might be properly called a post; this being formed by tying together several stalks of the papyrus plant, of which the opened buds made the capital.

The title thus used is happily chosen, for the early form was doubtless simply a post and not a pillar, as appears from the

* See Journal Am. Eth. and Arch.; Dr. Fewkes, editor.

† Book of Breaths of Life: M. Horrack's translations.

pictures on various monuments. On the famous alabaster sarcophagus of Oimenepthah,* among the representations of the rites of the dead are portrayed the ancient forms of this post, which is a plain shaft rising to the height of the doors of entrance to Amenti, that under world whither departs the setting sun. To pass these entrances it was necessary for the dead to pass this post, as it stood before the doors intercepting the passage.

These posts are represented with a human mask before one entrance, and in another picture the head is that of the god Anubis, who is sometimes called Guide of the Way, from his office of leading the deceased into the presence of Osiris, Judge of the Dead, as also his general supervision of the mummy on the path of the dead. That these posts were of some especial importance in the rites of the dead may be inferred by their reappearance in the scenes of the ceremonial in one of the last acts, where they appear to have fallen from line, their mask-capped summits sweeping forward over the actors, accentuating by this movement their import in the drama going forward.

The post is an important feature in Indian ceremonial.† The Sioux had a custom of striking the post in their dances, especially in the sun dance, and there was then an obligation to speak the truth;‡ the Indian, in this primitive manner, appearing to enforce the Egyptian's apostrophe of the God of the Sun as "he who speaks true;" "living on truth;" "Hail to thee, Ra, Lord of Truth." The post of the Eskimo is remarkable in being a history, through carving and painting, of the owner's pedigree, which proves his descent from the gods. The post is also a prayer ensign, calling on the sky gods to give life to the living or to the dead, as their occasion of erection may determine.

But it is among the Ojibwa Indians that its purport becomes of especial interest, for it is used as a sign of initiation to the Midē-wegan lodges. These lodges are noticeable by their form of construction, for they are rectangular in shape, and the series

* Fragments in the British Museum. See illustrations by J. Bonomi; S. Sharpe, *descrip.* Oimenepthah was father of Rameses the Great. Period, 1175 B. C.

† See the five posts in construction of the kibwa altar, represented by Dr. Fewkes, *editor Jour. Am. Eth. and Arch.*, vol. ii, p. 95.

‡ Captain Bourke, on the Medicine Men of the Apaches: Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1887-'88.

of spaces, four in number, are ranged east and west so as to open one into the other, very much after the plan of the religious architecture of Egypt, which presents a series of quadrangles opening into each other and in which the columns appear to have some reference to the rising disk of the sun. It is the living sun which shines through the colonnade of the Egyptian temple, and it is "the dead" sun that passes "the posts" in the under world, while with the sun is the mummy which is in "the way" of revivification. The column of the upper world is figured as that sacred plant of the Nile, the lotus, in whose germinating blossom the god Shou is sometimes represented as having his birth. Thus by the association of the God of Light and the plant the relation between the column and the sun seems to be implied.

In the Indian "lodges" the four spaces are typified severally by the posts erected, their number and decoration being sign of degrees of initiation—milestones, as it were, marking the journey on the path of life. The first lodge has but one post, on which is fixed a stuffed owl; the second has two, the third three, and the fourth four posts. The post surmounted by the owl is retained throughout, and symbolic colors embellish the increased numbers, while the addition of a human figure on one and a lateral bar on another, thereby simulating a Latin cross, identify the posts of the advanced degrees, implying changes in the condition of the initiate. These posts are set east and west, and thus are supposed to receive the first life-giving beam of the rising sun.

One who has been so fortunate as to be initiated into the fourth lodge is believed to have acquired divine honors. The Midēwiwin records also designate a path that, having begun at the first entrance-way, leads to the "land of the setting sun," so showing that the path of life is directed by the sun—a notion reiterated in Egyptian hymns with great poetic beauty of expression.

It has been remarked that in the Egyptian representation of the rites of the dead there is an act in which the posts lean over the actors; this act is performed in the fourth scene. The same occurs in the fourth lodge of the Midēwiwin, where the two posts, upright in the foregoing lodges, are represented leaning over the Indian actors.

In observing these parallels it should not be overlooked that the figures used to designate the degree post—that is, the owl and the cross—are conspicuous in the hieroglyphic writing of Egypt; and a glance at the sarcophagus of Oimeneptah will show not only numerous hieroglyphic figures of the owl as part of the text, but also the peculiar Latin form of the cross in the Midē-degree post, may be seen accompanying the bird, as also the same species of bird is noticeable beside a simple, upright shaft—a self-supporting post.

The appearance of the owl in these associations leads to the conclusion that it had some early importance in primitive Egyptian rites, for the talismanic force in Egyptian writing doubtless accrued through the symbolic meaning of the special objects represented by the hieroglyphics used in that writing.

The owl, it may be remembered, has been found embalmed in the Necropolis at Thebes, so implying its sacred character in Egyptian mythology. It is properly a bird of the night, of mystery and darkness, and its appearance in the description of the revivification of the dead is in accordance with primitive superstitions.

“The Apache Indians,” remarks Captain Bourke,* “believe that the dead remain a few days or nights in the neighborhood of the place they departed from life, and that they try to communicate with their living friends through the voice of an owl. If a relative hears this sound by night or, as often happens, he imagines he has seen the ghost itself, he hurries to the nearest medicine man, when he relates his story and a feast is instituted.”

It is occasion of speculation why the Midē priest has made this quite universally ominous bird of night a conspicuous emblem in the four rites of the Midēwiwin, since those rites are representative of the path of life. That he has associated the bird with the dead is manifest from the fact that he has represented it traversing the path of the dead, which also is figured in one of the charts given by Dr. Hoffman. But what is there in common on both paths, the living and the dead, that should lead to this sameness of emblem?

It is often found that the conception of the living soul among primitive peoples is that of the human shadow cast by the

* Medicine Men of the Apache.

sun. This "shade" is that which departs with the setting sun. The Ojibwa priest calls the land of the dead Shadow-land. The Shadow-land is the land of the setting sun, whither flee all the "shades" of the living—and the owl, does it not inhabit the dark, a living manes of the night?

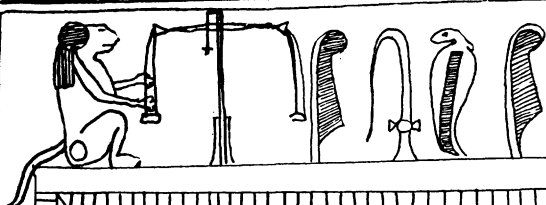
It is of interest to note the fact that the Indian, in what has been termed a barbaric state, has conceived of and pictographically represented with much clearness of design "a way" or path of life, as also of death. This representation is unique among the Indians of the north, for although similar concepts, more or less vague, are found among many northern tribes, the Midē-wiwin lodges are original and peculiar to the Ojibwa.

It appears, however, that certain Pueblo Indians have an idea of a path which is pursued by the dead, this path being in the under world, as is the Egyptian "way," which is termed the "right path." "Apheru openeth thee the right way," we read in an address to the deceased; also in the litany of Ra, that deity (the solar god) is apostrophized as "he who opens the pathways of the sarcophagus," so referring to the guidance and revivification of the dead.

It is of especial interest, in comparing these ideas in relation to the path of the dead located in the under world by the Pueblo Indians with the Egyptian, that in each is discovered a belief in a judge who appears at some juncture to judge the dead. Beside this remarkable similarity, certain purgatorial fires are described by both these Indians and Egyptians in the "way" which suggests a germinal idea of later religious development. Purification, it is claimed, may be accomplished in these fiery baths. However, there seems to be a condition, according to the Pueblo Indian, as among the Egyptian, when purification is impossible, and the dead are represented destroyed, a series of fire-baths discovering the unworthiness of the soul.*

The Indian description of judgment in Hades is vague in comparison with the scenes on Egyptian monuments and papyri, for the scales of justice are figured in a most realistic manner, with various accessories, all lending reality to the scene; and we are not only reminded that Osiris is ruler of the under world,

* Mortuary customs among the Hopi Indians: Dr. Fewkes and Mr. Stephen.



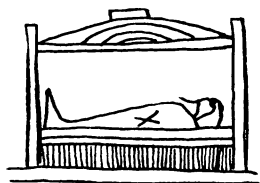
but we are shown that the Moon God is supervisor of the adjustment of the weights, as may be seen here in a fragment representing the decoration used in portrayal of the judgment hall, this god becoming thus an influential divinity, even presiding over the sentence of the judge, since this was determined by the balance of the scales under his charge. While this fact is evident, much more is suggested of the same import. The Moon God is adorned by a disk of the moon, which is painted blue in the original and its surface carefully striated. These lines represent water, the element used in the Book of the Dead to represent revivification. The Moon God thus exercises the prerogative of Lord of Truth by means of control over the element necessary to life. This god therefore acts in the capacity of the Rain God, Omowûh, in the Hopi myth in governing the disposition of the soul. A cosmogonical god in the Egyptian pantheon, he is of prominent interest in a comparison of Egyptian mortuary rites with those of the Hopi Indians.*

The lines which are traced across the disc of the moon, representing water, the agent of revivification of the dead, are ingeniously emphasized by the Egyptian artist throughout the Book of the Dead. In the present picture they are used for the

*It is of interest to note that one of the ancient titles of Osiris is Oun nowre, which, written in the original, is composed of hieroglyphic signs used in Indian pictography, and in which the water line is conspicuous.

frieze and upon the petals of the lotus capital and at the side of the column—in fact, they are the principal adornment of the judgment hall, as would be natural in a religious structure among a people who believed in the resurrection of the dead through the same fertilizing power as that which regenerates the plant world,

This line is sometimes straight, as often represented by the Tusayan Indian when associated with cloud and stepped figure. or it is serpentine and crinkling, as when used in mnemonics by the Ojibwa Indians, in which latter case it is particularly identified with the goddess Amenti, in whose extended palms it may be seen crinkling and live like a snake; and so thus the goddess of the under world becomes identified with all gods of humidity and fertilization. These lines, applied in representations of the drama enacted in the under world, may be seen everywhere on Egyptian monuments and tombs, shrines, catafalques, boats, and emblems are embellished with the magic symbol.



Sculpture channels out a frieze to represent the sacred element, and painting, more facile, pictures its blue ripple, while in no place does it ever cease to remind us of the primitive rain sign.

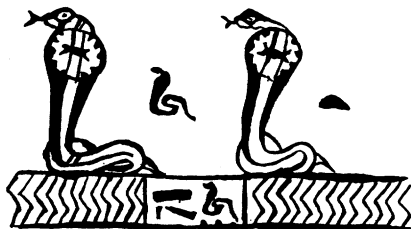
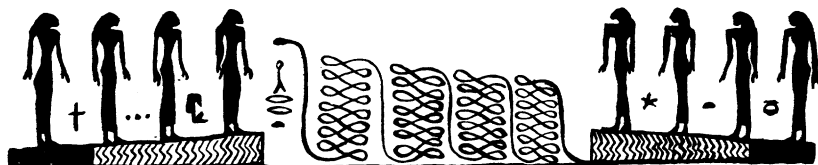
III.

But the Egyptian post, surmounted by a mask of the god Anubis, guide in the way identified as of parallel purport to the degree post used in the ceremonial of initiation to the Midē-wiwin Society, whose rites are claimed to explain “the right path,” is not the only figure suggestive of Midē symbols in the Egyptian rites of revivification of the dead; for near these posts, placed before the entrances of the under world, are successively placed two serpents—one a “good” serpent; the other a *cobra di capello*, described as “he who breathes fire.” These serpents are guardians of the doorways, acting thus in the capacity of the guardian snakes represented before the Midē lodges in the Ojibwa records.* Nor is this the only feature of parallelism

* Red Lake Records, pl. iii, Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1885-'86: Dr. Hoffman.

here developed. The Midē priest in the construction of his lodges causes to be placed in their vicinity cedar trees, as correspondingly may be seen a row of fir trees before the Egyptian representation of Amenti. The fir is not indigenous to the delta of the Nile, and its use in this case must refer to some traditional environment of the Egyptians—a fact of interest in the present investigation.

It has been said that the Egyptian depicted two serpents before the entrance of the under world, or Amenti, and one of these “breathed fire.” The Tusayan Indian describes two serpents—a plumed snake and a snake whose “breath can cause death at a distance,” and this serpent is represented as having a short, thick body.* His office is to guard the *sipapu*, the sacred opening to the Tusayan under world, as the *cobra di capello* guards the Egyptian under world.



The serpent is an ancient symbol, and when traced to primitive rites it is found to figure the lightning accompanying the summer showers. Its use either in sculptured figurement or in living reality is common in all rain

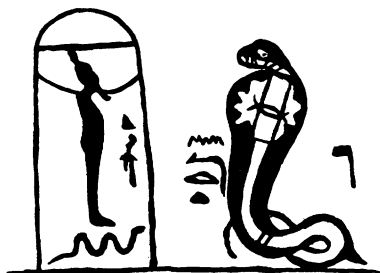
ceremonials among American Indians.

It appears, as has been said above, that two classes of serpents of similar description are each associated with the under world of both Egyptian and Indian myth, but it is yet to be learned if, as in Tusayan rites, the Egyptian associates the serpent with rain; for a ceremonial in which rain is the object is, by nature of the country in which the inundation of a river is the fertilizing agency, entirely foreign and must, in fact, be a survival of

* Dolls of the Tusayan Indians, p. 9: J. W. Fewkes.

rites belonging to the past. The symbol of rain among the Tusayan Indians, as among the Ojibwa, is a serpentine or parallel line. The Ojibwa line is like that here given from a representation of a scene in the under world on the sarcophagus of Oimeneptah.

This scene, beside showing the association of the serpent with the watery element, also is one of many indications of the importance of the serpent in the rites going forward; for further examination of the sculptures on the sarcophagus discloses it not only as guardian of the dead, but it is a principal figure in all of the scenes represented in the rite*—guard of the shrines of the dead, those mystic chambers wherein the dead await resur-



rection; it is also companion of Kneph-Ra (Spirit Sun), and it is farther on borne by a procession of men, when it is met by an obsequious group of four personages. At length, as the hours of the nocturnal death wear on, Osiris, lord of the dead, is discovered in mummy form, crowned by a helmet of dominion, and under his swathed feet is a serpent, while before the shrine in which the dead sun is figured appears the *cobra di capello*—the snake which “breathes fire,” whose thick, short body recalls the Tusayan serpent which guards the *sipapu* in the Indian myth.

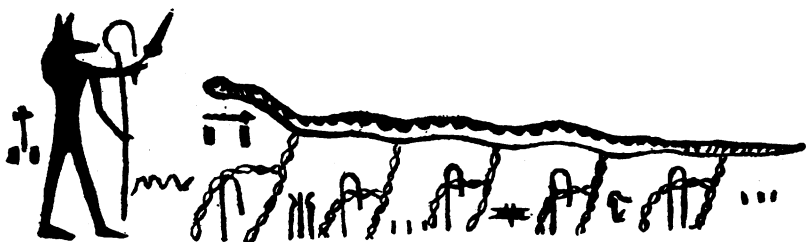
Following the scene in which Osiris appears are others even more weird. The serpent, fastened down to earth apparently to ensure the exercise of its magic power to compel rain, as in early time, by the summer shower, or at a later period, the inundation of the Nile, is under rule of the guide in the “way.”

This representation is of especial interest by the association of symbols given. First, we are reminded of the aerial forces invoked by the sail beneath the serpent, which is an Egyptian sign of breath or wind. Secondly, the dominating power of the

* As in the Ojibwa records, there are four chambers ending in a circular adytum representing the final abode of the dead.

forces appears to be implied by the crook, both in the hand of the god Anubis, guide in the way, and those beneath the serpent.

This crook is a primitive symbol of peculiar interest. It is of constant occurrence in Egyptian representations of the gods as a badge of authority. In the present instance it is in its nominal place in the hand of the god presiding over the special act going



forward, but its reappearance beneath the serpent is of special interest, since it is in this connection associated with the aerial elements, the wind and the waters from above, which are signified by the sail, and serpent brought down to earth.

In the picture representing the judgment of the dead a large crook stands before the judge, on which sits the nude form of a man. Is this the Egyptian's device to represent the deceased under trial?

It is of almost startling interest in this uncertainty of meaning to find that in their rain ceremonials the Tusayan Indians perform an especial rite in which the crook is made to represent the person of the dead.* This rite is accomplished not only by the use of the crook, but snake emblems and "white lightning" also form a part of the symbolism. Beside this fact, one of their divinities is represented with a crook in his hand,† a crook, as also a "flagellum," being a badge of Tusayan deities.

The scene above illustrated transpires in the course of the revivification of the dead and affords a general view of the Egyptian's concept of the elements required in resurrection of the dead. The sail represents the air, breath, or wind, and the serpent the watery element. These two are necessary to life.

* See Jour. Am. Eth. and Arch., vol. iii: Editor, Dr. Fewkes.

† See Tusayan Dolls, pl. vi, 7: Dr. Fewkes.

The words breath and spirit (ghost) are of one original meaning, and thus we discover that the Egyptian believed that is was necessary to be "born of water and of the spirit"—an idea which has become of sacred import in a later religious dispensation.

The illustration, so full of suggestion, is one of numerous examples in a scene wherein the drama enacted in the under world



appears to concentrate its interests. In this scene are represented women seated upon coils of the *cobra di capello*, the right hand resting on the serpent, the left hand supporting a star; and here also are two masked men, in whose hands are held live, quivering snakes with the well known freedom of the Tusayan Indian in his rain ceremonials.

IV.

It is observable that whatever progress the Egyptian made in a more elaborate finish in the adornment of the temple, the structure was always of a rectangular shape. It is this shape, so adhered to throughout Egypt's history, that is often discoverable in hieroglyphic writing. It appears also in illustration of the text, so declaring its symbolic importance.

It may be seen in the Turin papyrus of the Book of the Dead, where it occupies a conspicuous place, and where in the later rites there described it is

accompanied by a snake and the Latin-formed



cross, as also the same

rude portrayal of appeal by the figure of two uplifted arms, which is used in the Ojibwa mnemonics in prayer to the Sky

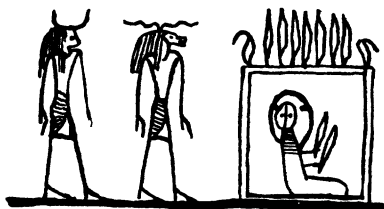
God. This rectangle is diversified from an elongated square to another more elaborated figure in which the outjutting lines at one side appear to represent doors, or a place of closed entrance, while in direct association with this elaborated figure, suggesting by its closed entrance a secret chamber, is an elongated square enclosing a snake, an illustration forcibly recalling the statement of Ælian that the Egyptians kept a sacred snake in a secret chamber of their temple.

These rectangles were conspicuously the illustrations of the scenes of the text in this part of the papyrus, which, suggesting their importance, led to a renewed study



of other vignettes preceding them, if happily their purport might be determined. The rectangle next discovered was quadrangular, and in place of the closed outjutting lines suggestive of a doorway, the same lines were open and doubled back, so providing an entrance-way; and near this rectangle was represented a presiding figure,

which, although in the customary dress of the Egyptian, was unique in appearance, since his head was spherical and decorated by divergent lines, after the fashion of the "Manidos" in the Ojibwa charts given by Dr. Hoffman, while curiously in the Indian chart may be seen the rectangle first observed in



the Egyptian papyrus, representing a closed chamber, and not far away is the figure of the Great Spirit with a spherical head, also decorated with divergent lines. The Great Spirit is accompanied by other spirits, whose heads are of similar configuration. The decoration is conspicuous, and its meaning seems to be implied in the representation of the emblematic bird of

the totem pole, the owl, whose head is crowned by the same divergent lines.*

The Egyptian figure above given is not a solitary variant, however, in the papyrus; a similar head or mask occurs in two other scenes, and each of these strange figures appears to be the presiding genius of a chamber which, both by its shape and in the fact of so outlandish a keeper, suggests a survival of some portion of a primitive ceremonial; and it was not with great surprise that on continued examination of the same papyrus a representation of scenes very likely to occur in a Midēwiwin ceremonial were discovered, wherein the instruction in the medicinal properties of plants is made one of the initiatory rites, and in which the owl figures as *deus ex machina*.



V.

The kibva of the Pueblo Indian, as also the lodge of the Midēwiwin, is rectangular and, as far as its site permitted, subterranean. Within this chamber toward the north is the *sipapu*, a consecrated orifice representing the place of exit from the under world, where is the path of the dead.



It is toward the north the niche for the dead was constructed in the Egyptian mastaba,† whose lengthened axis turned to the north, as does the rectangle representing the "lodge" of the dead in the Ojibwa records. In the Tusayan kibva the covered cavity, the *sipapu*, represent-

ing, as it appears, the under-world powers, becomes the center of devotional exercises, as suggested by the devotee kneeling before a rectangle in the Turin papyrus of the Book of the Dead. The *sipapu* of the Tusayan Indians is claimed to be the place of gen-

* A feathered owl helmet is used by the Tusayan Indians in their rain ceremonials. Jour. Am. Eth. and Arch., Dr. Fewkes, editor, vol. ii., p. 62.

† See M. Maspéro on the construction of Egyptian tombs: L'Archeologie Egyptienne.

eration of the human family; it is the *nadir* of the world in which resides the god whose office it is to make germs, the germs of life. Thus in its approach to the under world it appears to be the meeting place or junction of the upper and lower worlds—the path of the living and dead. This sacred square, with its orifice inhabited by the Maker of Germs, recalls that sacred square of virgin earth, emblem of reproductive life used in the rites of the Sioux,* and the stone covering it directs the attention to that stone mentioned by Dr. Hoffman which was placed at the foot of the degree post in the Midē ceremonial. Is this also an emblem of life and shall to it be applied the designation given to a sacred stone in the Book of Breaths of Life—that is, the “Stone of Truth?” However this may be, it is of interest that the rect-



angular figure adopted so largely in Indian pictography* and in oriental construction is represented as an emblem on the censer used in Egyptian ceremonials in honor of Khem, God of Reproduction, so associating it, as among the Sioux, with germinating life, an association already implied by the Pueblo Indians' designation of the god dwelling beneath, as the Maker of Germs; and what says the Book of Breaths of Life?

“Thine individuality is permanent.

Thy body is durable;

Thy mummy doth germinate by order of Ra himself.”

The elongated square on the censer of the Egyptian god Khem, the God of Reproduction, directs the attention to the use of the emblem in the rites of the dead, figured on the sarcophagus of Oimeneptah, where a divinity is shown in the act of introducing the head of a serpent into a rectangle, the performance of

* See illustrations of my Masks, Heads, &c.

which act is overlooked by the "good serpent" of the under world drama. This picture is a valuable suggestion of the statement by the Tusayan Indian that there was a serpent who kept guard of the *sipapu*, the rectangular place within which was an orifice opening into the under world. An alligator whose tail ends in a snake's head reminds us that the rite transpires in a river country. The alligator is not only familiar to the Egyptian, but also to the Central American Indian.

Three ostrich plumes are placed above the Egyptian divinity's head in



this picture, as may be seen in another rite, where they are placed above a shrine containing a serpent, and beside which is the Moon God with a striated disc on his head, and in front of whom is the solar eye, with the figure of a priest in the performance of a rite.

The importance of the ostrich plume in Egyptian rites turns the attention to the fact that not only was it used as a symbol in rain rites among the Tusayan Indians, but the sacred pit or *sipapu*, as also the kibva, is consecrated by the sacred feather emblems. The feather, indeed, is conspicuous in all such rites, and is as directly associated with the "place of germs" as it is conspicuous in Egyptian rites of worship to the God of Reproduction, Khem.* In the consecration of his sacred chamber enclosing the *sipapu*, the "place of germs," the Indian priest prepares two feathers, one of which refers to the above and the other to the below—that is, the zenith and the nadir;† and while preparing these two feathers he prays that the dead may be partakers of the joys of the living—an example in itself of the association of the dead with rites relating to the *sipapu*, the "place of germs," while suggesting the Indian belief in the resurrection of the dead, which idea may have had its suggestion in

* See Wilkinson's illustration of the rite.

† The Peruvians called the valley of Cuzco the nadir.

the birth of plants from the seed buried in the earth ; such an idea, indeed, seems to be implied by the term used regarding the *sipapu*—that is, the “place of germs.” This conception adds a peculiar interest to both the structure of the *sipapu* and the *kibva*, in which the sacred cavity is placed.* In a sense, this chamber might be termed the shrine of the dead.

“The tombs of the kings,” remarks M. Maspéro, “were constructed on the model of the under world.” The mummy, which was described by the Egyptian as “germinating by the order of Ra,” was deposited in a deep pit in a secret chamber of rectangular shape, and the pit was at the northeast, as is the mysterious *sipapu* of the Tusayan Indians.

The Egyptian chamber, it must be remembered, like the Tusayan *kibva*, with its sacred cavity (associated as it appears with the dead in the under world), was also rectangular, its approach by a series of steps.

The stepped figure is a common hieroglyphic in Egyptian writing ; but it is an interesting fact in this connection that the figure is especially ascribed to Ptah, the Egyptian’s primordial god, who is apostrophised in Egyptian hymns as the “Father of Fathers,” “the Maker.” His office in the under world is to unite the substances of the human corpse, and in this capacity he is represented on a platform approached by four steps. These steps are conspicuous among the emblems borne on the shoulders of the worshippers of Khem, the God of Reproduction.

It has been said that Ptah unites the substances of the corpse, and in this capacity the stepped figure becomes his especial emblem ; and in this connection it should be remembered that the same emblem identifies Isis who, like the Tusayan rain deities, wears the stepped figure upon her head.† It is Isis who resuscitates the dead body of Osiris, whose mummy is seen accompanied by serpents in the first illustration offered in the present paper. Thus in both examples of the use of the stepped figure, the rites of the dead are clearly identified.

Ptah, it will be remembered, is identified by the mask of a frog in one of his disguises. The frog as an emblem of Ptah

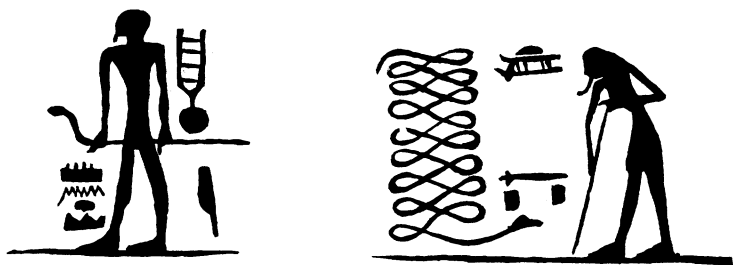
* See V. Mindeleff on structure ; Dr. Fewkes and Mr. Stephen on myth and tradition.

† See figures in Masks, Heads, etc., *op. cit.*

becomes a symbol of the vital principle in water—that is, its apparent power of reorganization.

To Isis has been described the principle of humidity, and power over water and humidity are the attributes of the representative divinities of rain ceremonials.

Comparison has been made between the Egyptian Moon God and Omowah, the cloud-compelling divinity of the Tusayan Indians. An interesting parallel may be deduced from the fact that by the means of certain processes of lavement and white covering of face the dead are believed to be transformed into an Omowûh, as by certain rites the Egyptian dead become Osiriana (or Ounowre). The Omowah, spirit of the deceased, so divinized, assumed the prerogatives of a rain god.



This fact explains the occurrence of rites to the “early dead” or those “gone before,” as we should say, in rain ceremonials wherein are made appeals that the dead may partake of the joys of the living.

Resurrection is desirable for the dead as for the plant world; the rain god is an object of appeal, therefore. The magic force of life invoked by the Egyptian, as by the Indian, exists in water, and no more representative rite could be instituted than the Tusayan rain ceremonial.

But if the ceremonial represented in the Book of the Dead is an adaptation of primitive rain ceremonials, there would be not only cases of resemblance, such as the use of the serpent in the rites represented on the sarcophagus, but other objects would appear of apparent primitive origin. And so, in fact, may be discovered by any one familiar with the symbols of the red races.

For instance, the ladder necessary for approach to the kibva,

and which was consecrated at the time of the consecration of the chamber itself,* reappears in the sculptures of the sarcophagus mentioned above. It is ranged by the side of each actor in one of those scenes where obviously the serpent is the chief object of the rite, as an individual figure on page 253 illustrates. It also is represented in hieroglyphic association with the square, of the symbolic significance implied by the illustration on page 250; for here as there the head of the serpent is directed toward the square, while the line above it suggests that the locality is beneath the surface of the earth. The ensemble of figures indeed might imply a snake rite in the secret kibva, approached only by the ladder given in this vignette.

VI.

The numerous parallels that have so far been cited seem to suggest, perhaps, simply that ceremonialism practiced by different peoples has much the same object. It is the outcome of a desire for life, and from some common instinct similar mimetic methods are adopted through man's recognition that like causes bring like effects; which recognition he appears to share with insects, which for the same purpose make use of alluring or warning colors, assume a digressive mimicry or a protective resemblance, as their necessities require in the preservation of species. All organic life shares in the effort to preserve itself, and the lower and higher world dramatize to that end, masquerading in borrowed paraphernalia. It is not strange, then, that there should be a great similarity of means in the performance of religious rites, since those rites have similar ends—that is, the preservation of life. Man, whatever country he occupied, might resort to dramatization, mimicking those forces, elemental or animal, which he believes create or contribute to life, this being done by means of symbols and adroit personifications, the universality of these customs becoming the fruitful source of parallel notions.

But in a comparison between Egyptian rites and primitive rain ceremonials we confront civilization with barbarism. The

* See *Pueblo Architecture*: Victor Mindeleff, Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1886-'87.

rites of the Book of the Dead are those practiced by a people whose civilization is estimated to have existed four thousand years, and the parallel notions, with all the cumulative testimony contained in both writing and picture, to those of barbarians are suggestive of a survival of ancient ceremonials—ceremonials, too, now practiced by the red races. This fact is full of ethnic interest and might be the basis of a treatise of great ethical importance. However, it is the object here to produce facts and not philosophize. In the comparison of the Midēwiwin ceremonial with the rites represented on the Oimeneptah sarcophagus it may be objected that the Egyptian represents scenes in the under world, which is not the case with the Ojibwa rite. The Egyptian proceeds with the setting sun, while the Midē ceremony ends at this point. But the rites of the Midē include the rites of the dead as well, if occasion demands.

At the death of a novice, who is about to be initiated into the Midēwiwin, relates Dr. Hoffman, the deceased Indian lad is personated by his father, who represents his presumable movements on the path of the dead, enacting a drama which has for its end final entrance into the desired haven of Midēwiwin. This representation is in fact a delineation of the path of the dead, and its bourne is the entrance of the path of the living. Such indeed is the end of the Egyptian rites of the dead. The dead follow the “dead sun” to its rebirth in the land of the living; and his living path, is it not down those lotus-columned temples which gradually led the Egyptian devotee into the shadowy region of the adytum imaging the departed light of the sun?

Each ceremonial among the Egyptians appears to look to resuscitated life, and wherever appeal is made water is the principal emblem, and with that emblem is associated the snake. This is true of Indian rites.

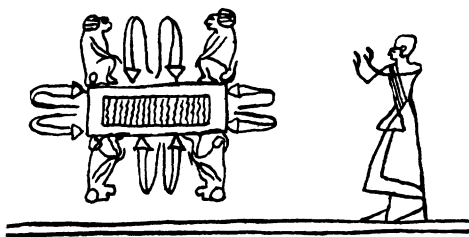
In a Nahuatl ceremonial a statue of Tlaloc, god of the rain, was placed before a pool of water; wherein were frogs and snakes, and at one epoch of the drama the snakes were seized in the teeth of the actors and carried off into the procession, where they were presumably swallowed.

This rite was performed once in eight years for the avowed purpose of restoring life to plants—“the rejuvenescence of food

plants." The actors wore masks figuring animals and birds, among which the owl is especially mentioned.*

Thus, as in many other accounts of what has been characterized as a snake dance, the emblems are those known in the Egyptian rites. The owl, the frog, and the snake are always figured in the primitive rite, in which also a rain god appears as chief figure.

In the Egyptian representation of the rites of the dead a pool is pictured, upon whose borders sits the Luna God with the striated disk upon his head. An Egyptian devotee approaches



this pool with uplifted hands. The burning censers on all sides remind us of the fact that fire was the purgatorial element of the Egyptian as among the Tusayan Indians.

It is related that the ancient Hindoos were accustomed to bury their dead beneath the water of some stream whose current was turned aside for the purpose, when, the burial accomplished, the waters were permitted their natural course, covering the grave.

There is a saying among the natives of Greenland that when a man sleeps by the river he hears the singing of the dead.

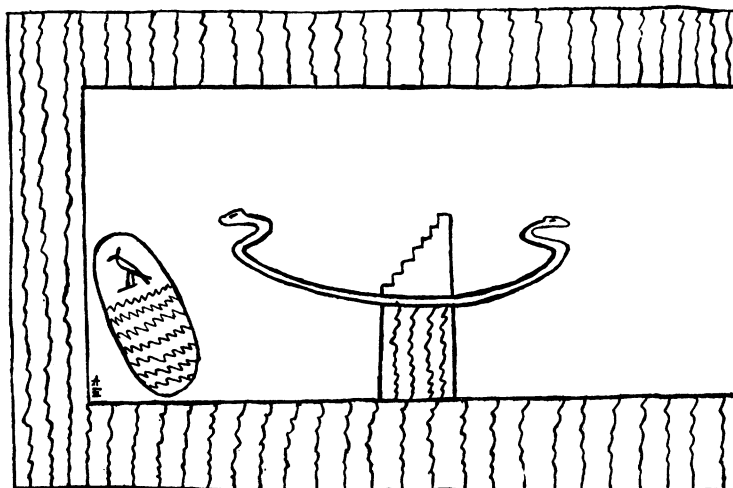
The funeral procession of the dead was required to pass a sacred lake consecrated for the purpose near every large city in Egypt, and at the beginning of the funeral ritual were often represented four rudders, each of which was applied to one of the four cardinal points.

The most important festival of these people was that celebrated in the summer solstice in honor of the Nile, when an invocation for the inundation was made to the deity of the river, and the god Nilus is represented encircled by a serpent beneath the rocks of a cataract pouring out the sacred waters from a hydræ held in his hands.

* See "A Central American Ceremony (including Dr. Seler's translation of the Nahuatl), compared to Tusayan rain ceremonials, by Dr. Fewkes.

According to Herodotus, if the drowned body of an Egyptian, or even a foreigner, is found on its margin, the neighboring town is obliged to embalm it in the most splendid manner, when it was entombed in one of the sacred sepulchers. No one, not even a friend, was allowed to touch the corpse, the priest of the Nile alone having that privilege.

But not only were the waters of the Nile sacred to the living and a lake consecrated to the dead, but, to emphasize the emblem, as it has been said, it is placed in the hands of the goddess of the under world. In Egyptian writing it appears in phrases such as "spirit of water," "the source." It is a conspicuous



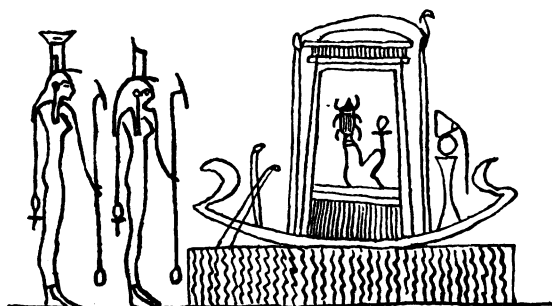
hieroglyphic in the verb "to live;" also in "living" and "light." For it may be claimed the same meaning which it has in Ojibwa mnemonics—that is, a magic power over both life and death.

In that interesting ceremonial, which has been preserved in Peruvian annals, wherein it appears that, like the Egyptian, this remarkable people set apart a lake* for rites of worship, the revivifying powers of water appear to be suggested. Preparatory to the ceremony, states the narrator, there were thrown across the lake two ropes, forming equal angles, which, like the four Egyptian rudders in the rites of the dead, may have pointed out

* The lake Gualvita.

the four world quarters.* This accomplished, the Prince of Peru, anointed with oil of turpentine and gold, accompanied by his retinue, embarked from shore, when, on reaching the magic spot of the intersection of the ropes, he precipitated himself into the divine element amidst hymns of praise sung by his people, who stood on shore watching the performance of the rite, and among whom appeared two ancient men clothed in the sacred *atarraya*, a garment fashioned like a fish-net, this garment being the symbol of death, the remembrance of which is so constant in the rain ceremonials of the Pueblo Indians.

"The Egyptians represent," remarks Herodotus, "the sun and moon in boats, so implying that their movements depend upon



humidity." The solar bark is represented upon a river in the under world, as is here illustrated, where may be recognized the goddess Isis with the stepped figure upon her head, Nephthys, her sister goddess, standing at her side. The voyaging mummy sits within the shrine, a scarabeus† on its head, sign of solar action, the vivifying power of heat. Here is also an open lotus, lying upon the disk of the sun, which rests upon an altar. The river depicted beneath, as also the boat, imply that all renewal of life depends on water; even the sun's action depends upon

* See ceremonial of taking possession of the valley of Cuzco, in which a stone was slung to each corner of the four quarters of the world. Antiquities of Peru: Rivero and Tschudi.

† It is of importance to note that the Tusayans have also a sacred beetle in their myths. This beetle lives on an herb that is used to cure snake bites, an example of an association of ideas of constant recurrence in primitive rites.

that element; and to be explicit, that as human life exists by its fertilizing power, the Egyptian has added the water symbol directly beneath the mummy.

In this under world the gods are not only guardians of the voyaging mummy, they are laborers in the field. Tall stalks of grain are seen flourishing upon the borders of streams. Such is the employment of the Hopi divinities in the under world.

The Egyptian artist is munificent in his display of the beloved element, which in the under world is the spring of eternal life, as an example of which the figure on page 257 is given; for in this illustration may be seen the "stepped figure" elsewhere mentioned, beneath which is the rain symbol, the two signs being contingent that are of constant occurrence in the figurement of Tusayan rain gods, their helmets being principally rain, cloud, and stepped figures.

Description has been given above of a Peruvian rite in which the Prince of Peru disports himself in the waters of a sacred lake. Such was the custom of the kings of Egypt previous to an act of adoration in the temple.

This custom seems to have suggested a scene represented in the sculptures of the sarcophagus of Oimenepthah. As the happy soul approaches the final abode of immortal life, he enters a stream of water and disports himself. The action of each individual betrays eagerness at one moment, devotion in another, and finally a divine ecstasy seizes him, when he assumes all the barbaric postures of an Indian dance.

So men repeat themselves; and what our aboriginal races have done Egyptian civilization renewedly repeated, adhering like all ritualists to the letter of the laws laid down in a traditional past.

